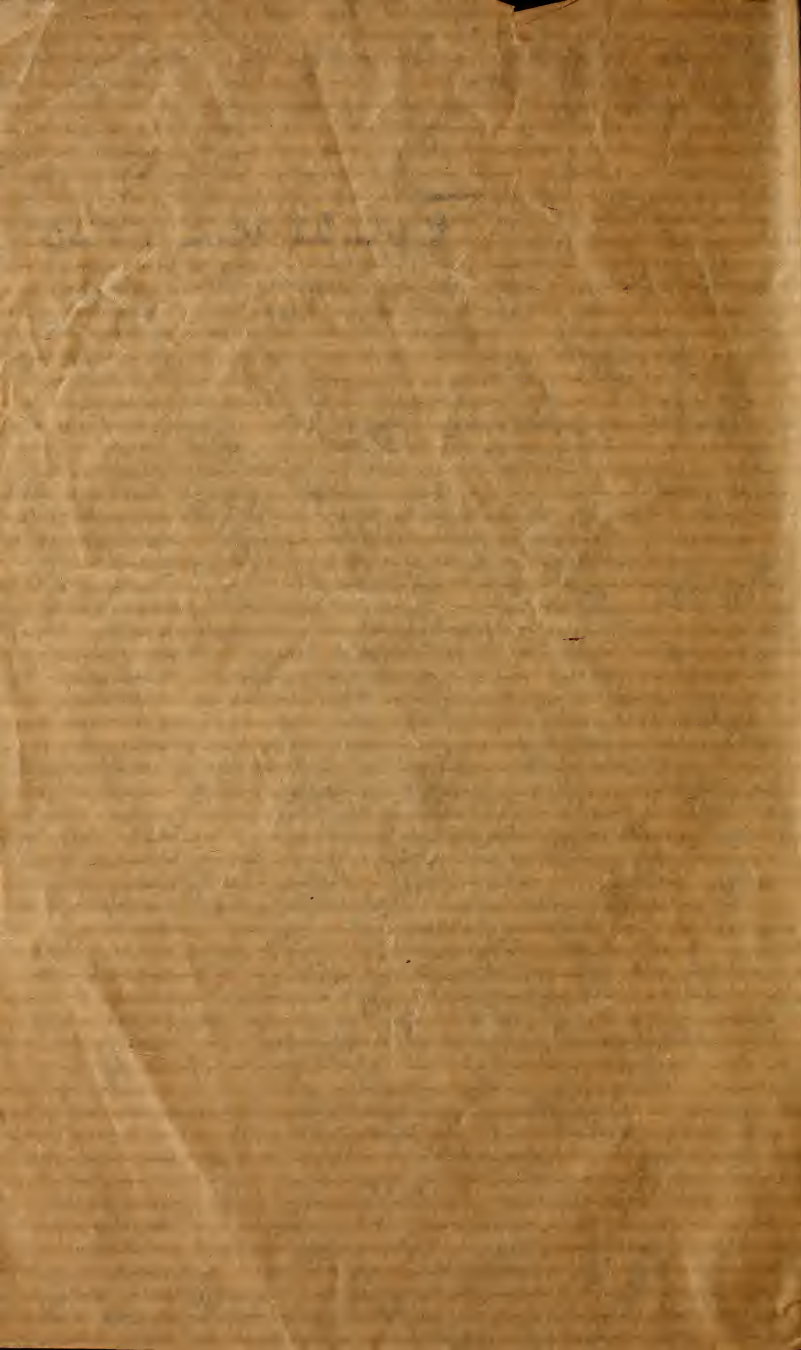


Political - 1860.



THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THE RESULT OF SOUTHERN AGGRESSION.

SPEECH

OF

HON. C. B. SEDGWICK, OF NEW YORK.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, March 26, 1860.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. SEDGWICK said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Mere partisans are very apt to forget that there is a philosophy of politics, and that parties are not always mere instruments and tools used by cunning and corrupt leaders to secure place and power. They forget that, even in politics, names do sometimes stand for things; that great principles do sometimes lie at the foundation of political movements. The character, strength, and virtue of a party are not always to be measured by the probity and steadfastness of its leaders. The blind may lead it astray through ignorance, the corrupt may betray through selfishness and ambition; but if a party is born of fate, required by history, and follows the inexorable logic of events, it will survive when its blind leaders are forgotten, and the memory of the corrupt is execrated.

The Republican party represents important living ideas and sentiments. If successful, it is to establish practical and essential reforms in the administration of this Government, and to revive and secure the principles and policy upon which it was founded, upon which its usefulness depends, and upon which its historical character stands. If it means less than this, labor in its behalf is wasted, and hope for its success is worse than idle.

The whole creed of the Republican party was admirably expressed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. STEVENS] upon this floor in a few words. It hates tyranny and oppression everywhere; in the dominions of the Autocrat and the Sultan no less than at home, and at home no less than in foreign lands. It desires the universal prevalence of liberty, and the fullest recognition of the equality of civil rights everywhere; but having no power to control

the tyranny of foreign States, its duty is discharged if it remains true to its own faith and principles, and resists steadily and faithfully, within the limits of constitutional power and by lawful and peaceful methods, the establishment and expansion of slavery in this Republic, and prohibits its existence and continuance under Federal authority. For the just exercise of Federal authority, so far as that extends, we are responsible, and no further. By this rule and limitation of responsibility we claim no right, by Federal legislation, to interfere with any municipal laws or regulations of any of the States, so long as they refrain from unjustly interfering with and abridging by State legislation rights secured to us by express constitutional guaranties. But we do claim the right and will to exercise it whenever and wherever, in our judgment, the public interest, safety, and honor, demand it, of going to the extreme verge of constitutional authority to resist and limit slavery beyond the boundaries of the States, giving to the Constitution such fair and liberal construction in favor of life and liberty as the common law justifies and demands. In a word, the Republican party is the party of liberal ideas and principles; of progress; of improvements; of common education; of protection; and will construct those ideas and sentiments into legislation just so far as sound discretion allows, and just so far as constitutional power will admit.

This policy of the Republican party is assailed by others upon widely different grounds. The extremists of the North say that the Federal Constitution upholds and sanctions slavery; that it guaranties the claim of property in man; that such was its original design and intent; that it has been administered so as to secure that end; that all the departments of Government under it have been controlled for this

purpose—the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative; that its foreign policy has been shaped in accordance with such design; and they insist that, while we confine ourselves to constitutional resistance to slavery, we can do nothing to limit and restrain its encroachments; and that the only hope of liberty is in the overthrow of the Government and the subversion of the Constitution—both which they hope to compass by peaceful means; and they say, and very truly, that the Republican party proposes and will consent to no such desperate measures.

The extremists of the other section, holding precisely the same views as to the character of the Government and the proper construction of the Constitution, and not denying the truth of the historical statement, say that the very existence of the Republican party is a standing menace to their institutions; that its future success means nothing less than abolition or emancipation; and that its attempted administration of the Government, although called to power by the will of a majority of the people constitutionally expressed, is to be resisted by force of arms, and to the violent dissolution of the Government.

The abolitionists, in Christian charity, advise us to dissolve, because we are weak, impotent, and incapable of good.

The oligarchists, with equal coolness and impudence, require that we shall disarm, because we are wicked, powerful, and capable of mischief.

I have said that names sometimes stand for things; it sometimes occurs in politics that names stand after the substance of things has departed. So have I seen in our age the term *Democracy* abused. The idea of a true Democracy is captivating, admirable. In contradistinction from a despotism, a monarchy, an oligarchy, it represents the government of the whole people, who, by their freely-chosen servants or agents, administer the Government for the common advantage and safety; for the benefit of *all*, and not for the benefit and glory of *one*—a king or despot; nor for the benefit of the *privileged few*—a *nobility* or *aristocracy*. In its true and honest administration and conception, it secures an equality of civil rights; every member, however poor and humble, of whatever origin or birthplace or creed, is a real sovereign, and a possible lawgiver or magistrate; not that each inherits equal capacities and gifts of genius, and advantages of education, and benefits of circumstance and fortune, but that each has equal civil rights, and is to be controlled by equal and just laws. Such is our idea of Democracy—the government of the people. But how is it in practice and in fact? Who are the controlling men and what are the acknowledged principles of the Democratic party? Their chosen leaders deride and ridicule the idea of the equality of human rights; they scoff at the principles upon which our independence was achieved, and upon which our

institutions rest; they stand here as the representatives, not of freemen, but of property. They would reverse the old presumptions of the common law in favor of liberty; strike out the golden rule from the teachings of Christianity; hold that Governments were instituted among men for the oppression of the many and the enriching of the few; look upon the civilization which bursts the shackles, and the common education which dispels the ignorance of the masses, as curses, and not blessings. Instead of seeking aid and sympathy for honest attempts to emancipate their slaves, they demand new guaranties of their perpetual enslavement, and insist that it is the duty and the sole purpose of this Government to extend and perpetuate the vilest system of human slavery upon which the sun has ever shone. If any man fails to assent to this, and demands sufficient liberty of conscience, even for a faint and empty and dishonest *show* of regard for *popular* sovereignty, though he do “*not care*” whether or not it means popular *liberty*, and even though he *hopes* that it may secure and guard the interests of slavery, he is whipped like a spaniel in, or kicked like a cur out of, the ranks of this modern Democracy.

And yet this is the party whose honor is tarnished by the mere existence of the Republican organization; which insists that they are a mere lawless mob—thieves and traitors—whose continued existence is a standing menace to the South; whose success, attained through the ballot-box, and by a majority, and by constitutional and lawful methods, is to be resisted by the sword, as in itself the consummation of treason. Because the Republican party stands in the way of the spread of this promised sixteen million slaves over the Territories and through the States; because it is likely in the future to resist the opening of that accursed traffic which all civilized nations have pronounced piracy, and which this modern Democracy will demand—and if its principles, as announced on this floor by its acknowledged leaders, are admitted, will rightfully demand—it is an enemy to be disarmed; and to submit to its constitutional rule is subjugation and disgrace.

I speak of the slave trade as likely to be reopened. It is, in fact, this day reopened, with all its old atrocities and horrors. It is said, tauntingly, that slave ships, if fitted out at all, are fitted out in Northern ports, and by Northern men and capital. I am not here to deny the assertion; because I do honestly believe that you could recruit a slave crew at any time upon the exchange of a Northern commercial city, or in a Northern conservative church. But that makes no difference with the character of the traffic.

The Government at home, and its representatives abroad, are shuffling and attempting, by prating about the right of search and the freedom of the seas, to evade their treaty obligations to nations honestly engaged in its suppres-

sion. It is a fact, as notorious as any other in history, that to-day the American Republic is looked to as the great market for this renewed traffic from Africa; and it is equally notorious that its chief protection is the American flag. Now, I care not who is engaged in it, by whom it is advocated, by whom it is supported; nor from what port its vessels sail, Northern or Southern. I would see every man, and especially every Northern man, who dares to engage in this traffic, suspended at the yard-arm of the vessel which he dishonors; and the protection of the American flag should never, for one instant, shield a traffic so infamous and piratical. And yet, I know this language will be treasonable, if one more Democratic Administration gets into power.

I now propose to show, from the history of the country, that the Republican party is a necessity; that no self-constituted leaders have power to proclaim its dissolution or to surrender its principles; that if it could be betrayed into the folly of such surrender, or any essential abatement of its honest and logical demands, another, stronger, more radical, more virtuous, more successful, would arise from its ruins. I propose to show that the Republican party is not, and never has been, an assailant of any just right of the South; that slavery has been, always, not only justly but generously treated; that the people of the South have not only changed the whole policy of the country, but their own sentiments and original policy, and complain only because we will not change with them; that the Republican party of our day has been *forced* into existence, to prevent the universal prevalence of slavery; the revival of the slave trade; to preserve, or restore rather, the ancient policy of the Government; to protect themselves in their own States; to save even the old and cherished safeguards of personal freedom—trial by jury, the *habeas corpus*, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of conscience and opinion, and the right of petition—none of which can coexist with slavery.

Now, sir, I go back to the history of this Government, and I find that the prevailing and universal sentiment of the people of this country at the close of the revolutionary war, and at the adoption of the Federal Constitution, was in favor of liberty. Domestic slavery was considered a great moral and political evil—an institution existing, but at war with all their notions of human rights and principles of government, and to be abolished so soon as it could be, without deranging too violently existing interests. Let me refer to facts which establish this proposition, beginning with the Declaration of Independence, which asserts, in unmistakable terms, the equality of human rights, without distinction of birthplace, creed, or color, and the inalienable right of every man to liberty. I am not prepared so far to impeach the integrity of our revolutionary fathers,

as to say that this assertion of a great principle upon which that war was fought was an infamous cheat, a false pretence, a miserable dodge. I leave that for those the memory of whose ancestry will not be dishonored by the allegation. We know that the Constitution, though framed while a class of bondmen existed, nowhere guaranties the existence of slavery, nor does it intend any such guaranty. But it does, in terms, sanction measures looking to its eventual extinction. Look at the preamble. Look at its provisions authorizing the abolition of the slave trade. Look at the guaranties of that Constitution, and especially the guaranty of a republican Government to every State. When these guaranties are construed by a fair and honest and responsible court, we need nothing else but the Constitution itself to put an end to the institution of slavery.

Before the adoption of the Constitution—for I must hasten over these historical matters—the ordinance of 1787 had excluded slavery from all the territory then owned by us; and as there was no express power, and no power that could be implied from any provision of the Constitution, authorizing the acquisition, either by conquest or purchase, of any additional territory, that very act, adopted and sanctioned by the Government after the Constitution was formed, settled the policy of this country, and the right and power of Congress to establish that policy, to wit: the entire prohibition of slavery in any of the Territories of the Union.

Now, this ordinance was sanctioned and its policy adopted by the country. It became the fixed and settled policy of the country. So unalterable and well settled was it considered, that the petition of the inhabitants of Indiana—a portion of the Northwestern Territory, where slavery existed to some extent at the time of the passage of the ordinance—to permit its continuance was refused. They would neither allow slavery to be extended nor to be continued in the Northwestern Territory, nor would they permit this odious doctrine of squatter sovereignty to avail the settler in the Territory for the continuance of slavery within its borders.

This policy was disturbed, after a while, by the acquisition of Florida and Louisiana—events not contemplated when the Constitution was formed, nor within its power or authority. This acquisition reopened the question of slavery extension in the Territories, that had been settled in 1787. I call attention to another fact, that, at the adoption of the Constitution, all the States, save Massachusetts, were slave States. Massachusetts had just abolished slavery by judicial construction, as inconsistent with her bill of rights. Immediately thereafter, abolition societies were formed in all the States, South as well as North, and leading and prominent citizens of both sections became members.

Many of them had been members of the Constitutional Convention. These societies had in view three objects: first, the suppression of the slave trade after 1808; second, the abolition of slavery in the States; and, third, the general amelioration of the condition of the negro population. They petitioned the First Congress to go to the extreme verge of its power to effect these desirable ends. They were very free in the utterance and publication of sentiments, North and South, condemning slavery in as strong and excited terms as Garrison or Parker now use. None were stronger or more persistent in the utterance of these sentiments than the prominent and leading statesmen, jurists, and divines, of the South. I refer gentlemen who entertain any doubt on that subject to the valuable compendium prepared and published under the sanction of many members of Congress, who are now about me, from a book called "Helper's Impending Crisis." The name of it may not be unfamiliar to your ears. [Laughter.] I call attention to another fact: that, in 1791, Dr. George Buchanan, a member of the American Philosophical Society, delivered an oration at Baltimore, on the 4th of July, on the moral and political evils of slavery, before the Maryland society for the abolition of slavery, and the relief of the free negroes and others unlawfully held in bondage. It was published at the request of the society, and dedicated to one Thomas Jefferson, a name not altogether unknown in history. Appended to the request for its publication are names not unfamiliar in the history of the State of Maryland:

"What, will you not consider that the Africans *are men*? that they have human souls to be saved? that they were born free and independent? a violation of which prerogatives is an infringement upon the laws of God." * * *

"Many instances are recorded of persons of eminence amongst them. Witness Ignatius Sancho, whose letters are admired by all men of taste; Phillis Wheatley, who distinguished herself as a poetess; the physician of New Orleans; the Virginia calculator; Banneker, the Maryland astronomer; and many others, whom it would be needless to mention. These are sufficient to show that the Africans, whom you despise, *whom you more inhumanly treat than brutes*, and whom you unlawfully subject to slavery, *with the tyrannizing hands of despots*, are equally capable of improvement with yourselves." * * *

"America, I start at your situation! These direful effects of slavery demand your most serious attention." * * * "To the eternal infamy of our country, this will be handed down to posterity, written with the blood of African innocence. If your forefathers were degenerate enough to introduce slavery into your country, to contaminate the minds of her citizens, you ought to have virtue enough to extirpate it." * * * "Look back upon the curses which it has heaped upon your ancestors, and unanimously combine to drive the fiend-monster from your territory. It is inconsistent with the principles of your Government, with the education of your youth, and highly derogatory to the true spirit of Christianity." * * * "Slavery, the most implacable enemy to your country." * * *

"If it should be deemed injudicious or impolitic to effect it [the abolition of slavery] at once, let it be done gradually; let the children be liberated at a certain age, and in less than half a century will the plague be totally rooted out from amongst you. Then will you begin to see your consequence. *Thousands of good citizens will be added to your number, and your arms will become invincible.* Gratitude will induce them to become your friends, for the promise alone of freedom to a slave insures his loyalty." * * * "Eternal will be the disgrace of keeping them much longer in the iron fetters of

slavery; but immortal the honor of accomplishing their freedom."

Much more to the same effect might be quoted from this earnest oration.

I call attention to another book, published in 1796—a Dissertation on Slavery: with a Proposal for the Gradual Abolition of it in the State of Virginia, by St. George Tucker, Professor of Law in the University of William and Mary, and one of the Judges of the General Court in Virginia. It was dedicated to the General Assembly of Virginia. In his address to the reader, he says:

"The author, considering the abolition of slavery in this State as an object of the first importance, not only to our moral character and domestic peace, but even to our political salvation, and being persuaded that the accomplishment of so momentous and desirable an undertaking will, in a great measure, depend upon the *early* adoption of some plan for that purpose, with diffidence submits to the consideration of his countrymen his ideas on a subject of such consequence."

On the first page of the essay, we read:

"Whilst America hath been the land of promise to Europeans and their descendants, it hath been the vale of death to millions of the wretched souls of Africa." * * * "Whilst we were offering up vows at the shrine of liberty, and sacrificing hecatombs upon her altars; whilst we swore irreconcilable hostility to her enemies, and hurled defiance in their faces; whilst we adjured the God of Hosts to witness our resolution to live free or die, and imprecated curses on their heads who refused to unite with us in establishing the empire of freedom, we were imposing upon our *fellow-men*, who differ in complexion from us, a slavery ten thousand times more cruel than the utmost extremity of those grievances and oppressions of which we complained."

The bulk of his essay is devoted to a consideration of "the nature of slavery, its properties, attendants, and consequences in general, its rise, progress, and present state."

The following passages, scattered through the book, will show you how he regarded slavery:

"Thus early had our forefathers sown the seeds of an evil which, like a leprosy, has descended upon their posterity with accumulated rancor, visiting the sins of the fathers upon succeeding generations." * * *

"During the Revolutionary war, many of them (the colored people) were enlisted as soldiers in the regular army. Even slaves were not rejected from military service at that period; and such as served faithfully during the period of their enlistment were emancipated by an act passed after the conclusion of the war." * * *

"If ever there was a cause, if ever an occasion, in which all hearts should be united, every nerve strained, and every power exerted, surely the restoration of human nature to its inalienable rights is such. Whatever obstacles, therefore, may hitherto have retarded the attempt, he that can appreciate the honor and happiness of his country, will think it time that we should attempt to surmount them."

That this estimation of the wickedness of slaveholding was not peculiar to a few individuals, but was shared with them by many in Virginia, and probably also in the other slave States, is apparent from the fact, stated by Judge Tucker, that, between the years 1782 and 1791, more than ten thousand slaves were manumitted in Virginia alone.

It appears incidentally, in different parts of this dissertation, that the laws enforced upon the slaves were very cruel at and before the time of Judge Tucker—as bad as it has been said they have become by the agitation caused by the doings of the abolitionists.

He pleads earnestly for a plan of gradual emancipation, and concludes in this manner:

"If we doubt the propriety of such measures, what must we think of the situation of our country, when, instead of three hundred thousand, we shall have more than two million slaves among us? This must happen within a century, if we do not set about the abolition of slavery. Will not our posterity curse the days of their nativity with all the anguish of Job? Will they not execrate the memory of those ancestors who, having it in their power to avert evil, have, like our first parents, entailed a curse upon all future generations? We know that the rigor of the laws respecting slaves unavoidably must increase with their numbers. What a blood-stained code must that be, which is calculated for the restraint of millions held in bondage! Such must our unhappy country exhibit within a century, unless we are both wise and just enough to avert from posterity the calamity and reproach which are otherwise unavoidable. I am not vain enough to presume the plan I have suggested entirely free from objection; nor that, in offering my own ideas on the subject, I have been more fortunate than others; but from the communication of sentiment between those who lament the evil, it is possible that an effectual remedy may at length be discovered. *Whenever that happens, the golden age of our country will begin. Till then—*

"Non hospes ab hospite tutus,

Non Herus a famulis: fratrum quoque gratia rara."

Throughout the whole tenor of this book you will see that the author is laboring against the injustice and crime of the slave code. He repeatedly calls attention to the cruelty of the slave laws; for it has been asserted, and has become part of the modern doctrine on this subject, that cruelty in slave codes is the offspring of, and intended as a set off to, the abolition and anti-slavery excitement. But in 1796 the cruelty of slave laws was notorious in Virginia, and received the attention of a professor in one of the first universities of the State. He also stated the fact that within ten years after the formation of the Government there had been more than ten thousand private manumissions in the States of Maryland and Virginia.

Now, sir, under the influence of such sentiments and the labor of these abolition societies, besides the private manumissions referred to by Judge Tucker, and reaching to the number of 10,000, other results had ensued. The African slave trade was prohibited by the General Government at the earliest day allowed by the Constitution. Several States had previously, of their own motion, prohibited it. The States, not being within the constitutional restriction, had taken earlier action than the General Government could take on that subject. Again: several of the Northern slaveholding States had, by the acts of their Legislatures, abolished slavery. So Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, all the Northern slave States, in their own time and way, had, in accordance with the universal sentiment on the subject, both North and South, abolished the institution of slavery. I know that at that time the slave trade was in existence; that great commercial cities had been built up by it in the country from which we had our origin; that at the time when efforts were first begun in the British Parliament for its abolition, there were fourteen thousand slaves in the city of London; that the merchant princes of Eng-

land resisted the abolition of the slave trade on the same grounds of vested right, the same claim of guaranteed property in man, on which its abolition here is resisted by those who are interested in it. It was opposed as bitterly, with as much heat and fervor, in the Parliament of Great Britain, as it is resisted now here in the Hall of Representatives in this country. But it was finally abolished. The slave trade was given up. We acquiesced in it. All civilized nations have acquiesced in it. The slave trade has been declared piracy by the laws of all civilized countries.

Again: I call attention to the fact that the territorial policy to which I have alluded had been established and persisted in, and that it was believed that those measures would result in the emancipation, at no remote day, of all the slaves; that the institution was undermined; and that, by the same force of public opinion which had suppressed the slave trade, slavery itself would fall.

It was believed that the people of the several States would see that slavery was at war with all their notions of free government, in conflict with all truly Democratic theories and principles of government, demoralizing and impoverishing to any community in which it was maintained—as it unquestionably is. In 1808 the slave trade was abolished, but not yet declared piracy; and for ten years thereafter the efforts to abolish slavery ceased, mainly because it was esteemed unnecessary to continue them, and not because anybody at that day had been convinced that it was a just and Christian system, and one denoting the highest state and degree of civilization. That is a modern discovery.

After several incidents, to which I shall not have time to allude, including the organization of the Territory of Orleans—when, by a Federal politician, the doctrine was first announced of secession, as a remedy for the evils upon the question of slavery; for which he was promptly called to order by a Southern man, and barely escaped the censure of the House by a very small vote—after such incidental occurrences on the subject of slavery, the discussion arose in regard to our maritime rights, out of which the war of 1812 had its origin; and the subject of slavery was, for a few years, withdrawn from public attention. There was little intercourse in those days between the North and the South. The public attention North, where slavery had been abolished in the States, was not likely to be recalled, by any intercourse which then existed, to the evils of slavery; and so the Northern people, having discharged their own duty, were quiet upon the subject of slavery. The intercourse between the sections was confined to visits by Northern men of fortune and taste to planters at the South, whose hospitality they enjoyed, and were ready to return. But in 1819 this question of slavery, as a political question, was again brought to the public attention

by the claim of Missouri for admission into the Union as a slave State. It was an attempt to subvert the restrictive policy established by the ordinance of 1787; and although Missouri was not within the terms and letter of the ordinance, being subsequently-acquired territory, yet it was within the spirit of that policy, and would, if it had been owned by the United States at the time, have been included in it. It was found, upon a re-examination of the question of slavery, that, during this interval of peace in the North, slavery had been employed in extending its boundaries and deepening its foundations; and two events had contributed essentially to make this effort successful. I refer to the invention of the cotton-gin, in 1793, by Whitney, and its introduction into the South as a labor-saving machine; and to the acquisition of fine cotton-growing regions in Florida and Louisiana and Georgia, in purchases from France and Spain and the Creek and Seminole Indians.

Now, this Missouri controversy was thrust upon the country in 1819. I am not going to enlarge upon it. Its result was the admission of Maine and Missouri under one law, and the compromise known as the "Missouri compromise," brought about chiefly by the eloquence and the strenuous exertions of Henry Clay, then in the prime of life and in the full vigor of his unequalled powers. In the language of one then and now a citizen of this District, and a witness of that exciting controversy, that great champion sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, in his intense endeavors to bring about that compromise. Daniel Webster, too, then a young man, first made himself known as the advocate of freedom in the Territories. But the result was a compromise. Threats of disunion were then as freely uttered as they are now. Extreme men, following the example of Quincy in 1811, and the not very popular example of the Hartford Convention in 1814, proclaimed again the doctrine of secession.

But I must hasten to another point. The political question, as I have said, was then first brought to the attention of the country. But in 1816, about three years before that time, the Southern people, becoming alarmed at the symptoms of discontent among their colored population, especially the free blacks, started the idea of the Colonization Society. The free blacks had become, or were considered, a dangerous element in their society; and this led to the policy of their colonization in Africa. This plan, as everybody must see who considers it a moment, would require large Government aid; and to secure this Government aid, the North must be conciliated. They had no such dangerous element in their society. They had relieved themselves from the difficulties that always attend the existence of slave institutions. But they had become rich and prosperous; and they were to be appealed to, to obtain aid of the General Government to promote this

scheme of colonization; and, in order to secure their aid, it must be shown to be designed to improve materially the condition of the free blacks; and further than that, to tend ultimately to emancipation. Appeals were accordingly made, within the memory of some of those who now hear me, to Northern philanthropists. Eloquent Southern men made touching appeals in behalf of the degraded free blacks of the South; and such men as Gerrit Smith and Arthur Tappan and William Goodell, and other men who are now supposed to be fierce enemies of the South, were appealed to, and their aid obtained to further this Southern scheme of emancipation. A citizen of Ohio, Benjamin Lundy, whose sympathies were aroused upon this subject, removed to Baltimore, and established there a paper called *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*.

It was about this time that a young man, born in the town of Newburyport, Massachusetts, educated in our Northern schools, began to teach the doctrine of ultimate emancipation, through colonization, to the citizens of Boston. The doors of the most magnificent churches in that city flew open, as upon oiled hinges, at his approach. His eloquence was the theme of every tongue, and his praise sounded throughout the land. He was called upon to aid in this attempt of Lundy to establish his paper in Baltimore. He went there as an assistant editor of *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, at the solicitation of the South. He there became acquainted with the atrocity of the inter-State slave trade. He there saw the workings of slavery for himself. He there saw that this scheme of colonization was Janus-faced; that at the South it meant new and increased guaranties for the perpetuation of slavery, while at the North it was held out to the rich and philanthropic as a means for the ultimate extinction of slavery. I say he observed this inter-State slave trade—a trade which was not stigmatized as piracy by law, but which was marked with every atrocious feature that ever distinguished the foreign traffic. More than that: it tears asunder those who have in some degree acquired the principles of civilization; and have been by it taught to feel more keenly the pangs of forced dissolution of family and social ties.

Not long after this, a ship owned by a Northern merchant, commanded by a Northern captain, and manned by Northern seamen, was chartered, and shipped a cargo of human beings at Baltimore for the New Orleans market. This man saw the slaves embarked. He had been invited South to edit a colonization paper, and, seeing these things himself, he spoke of them as they deserved in his paper. He seized the opportunity of commencing the attack upon a vessel fitted out in his own birthplace, which had engaged in a traffic so harrowing to his feelings and sensibilities. He printed an article in his paper, describing the conduct of these Northern men in bringing

vessels to Southern ports to engage in this abominable traffic, by which they could grow rich, while their conscientious neighbors, who desired to engage only in the legitimate coast-wise trade, could not make a living. And what was the result? Why, sir, although the article was aimed at individuals in the North alone, it did, in fact, strike a blow at the domestic slave trade; and the result was, that he was prosecuted, civilly and criminally; he was thrown into prison; he was mulcted in heavy damages in a libel suit; he went to prison, and there remained until the Northern colonizationists paid his fine and set this young liberator free. He returned to the North, but the doors of the churches, that were open to his teachings before, were rusted and fixed on their hinges when he went back to denounce the cruelty of slavery and the slave trade. He announced his intention to speak on Boston Common, as at least one place under the broad canopy of heaven in which he could give utterance to his conscientious convictions of truth; but he found that Northern sentiment was as unwilling to be disturbed upon this slavery question—nay, more so—than Southern opinions. But this man—gentle, loving, peaceable, truthful, just, but inflexible—was resolved not to be put down, North or South; and the result was, the publication of this paper, (the *Liberator*), the first number of which I hold in my hand, and in which he announces his intention to prosecute this war upon slavery to the end:

"I am in earnest. I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard."

That is from the first number of the *Liberator*, published in 1831, by William Lloyd Garrison. It has sometimes seemed to me that that man was sent from Heaven in answer to the poet's prayer, and to meet the time's necessity:

"We need, methinks, the prophet-hero still,
Saints true of life and martyrs strong of will,
To tread the land even now, as Xavier trod
The streets of Goa, barefoot, with his bell,
Proclaiming freedom in the name of God,
And startling tyrants with the fear of Hell."

Now, sir, allow me to return and take another departure. Laws in the Southern States forbidding the entrance of free persons of color, under penalty of imprisonment and sale, were passed as early as 1820, when there was no agitation upon the subject of slavery. It has been claimed that these laws of South Carolina and Louisiana and other Southern States were a direct infringement upon the constitutional rights of Northern men; that their rights had been deliberately invaded by law. This was no abstract question. Imprisonments were frequent under those laws.

In 1822, twenty-six captains of vessels then in the harbor of Charleston sent petitions to Congress, setting forth the inconvenience and loss to which they were subjected, and praying redress. This was early in 1822. The petition was with great difficulty prevented from

being presented, by the interference of Northern merchants, who were afraid that their commerce would be checked.

In 1831, Samuel E. Sewell, of Boston, went by ship to Charleston. There were colored men on board his vessel, liable to imprisonment. His family wished to remain there for their health; and he was compelled to place these colored men on board a British vessel, and place them under the British flag, in order that he might remain with his family in a harbor of one of the States of this American Union.

In 1832, a colored citizen of New Bedford went out as supercargo in a vessel he had chartered for the West Indies. He took a return cargo direct for Charleston. While there, he was arrested under this law, and, but for the strenuous efforts of the influential merchant to whom his cargo was consigned, would have been imprisoned under it.

In 1835, a gentleman of Boston found, in two days, twenty-six free-born citizens of Massachusetts who had been imprisoned in Southern jails, one of whom had been placed upon the auction-block in Mobile, having been taken from a vessel under the operation of this law. On their petition with others, the Massachusetts Legislature soon after passed a law appointing Mr. Hoar and Mr. Hubbard, two most respectable members of the bar in the State of Massachusetts, to proceed to Charleston and New Orleans, with directions to institute legal proceedings in the courts to test the constitutionality of these laws. The result is within the recollection of everybody. These men, who are such sticklers for law, for the observance of all the constitutional guaranties, for the sacredness of the decisions of the courts, would not even permit these Massachusetts gentlemen to bring suit before their own judges, to be prosecuted by their own lawyers, who had given opinions against the constitutionality of the law, and they were expelled from the State by threatened violence. And yet these men, if we do not run out at the first blast of the marshal's horn and pursue a poor fugitive in the Northern States, stigmatize us as traitors to the Union; if we do not pull off our coats and catch their negroes, they threaten to raze the fair fabric of our Union from turret to foundation-stone.

"Oh, that there might in England be
A duty on hypocrisy;
A tax on humbug; an excise
On solemn plausibilities;
A stamp on every man who canted."

It strikes me, that if such a capitation tax was recognised by our Constitution, it would tend amazingly to the relief of the Treasury.

I now come down to 1835, when this anti-slavery feeling North began to exhibit itself, and to make some head. I call attention to the condition of the public mind at that time. I submit to the candor of every gentleman who hears me, whether I do not state the truth when I say, that there was a state of feeling entirely friendly to the South in every particu-

lar; that there was a determination not to interfere in any manner with the question of slavery, and not even to permit its discussion, upon the ground that, although an admitted evil, it was a question exclusively for the South, and with which Northern men had no right to meddle. Colonization was tolerated, because it was a Southern measure, tending to emancipation in their own way and by their consent. Parties were divided North and South upon other and different issues—banks, tariffs, &c. They were determined to ignore this question. Candidates for office went so far as even to refuse to answer what their sentiments were upon the subject. So inconsiderable was the strength of the Abolitionists at the North. The slavery question was excluded from the church—the whole question was shut out and ignored.

Now, it was not because of any difference of opinion in respect to the character of slavery, but as to our rights and duties in regard to it, and in respect to interference with it. I know that a very different sentiment now prevails and controls the Northern States. Who are the aggressors? How has it come about that Northern sentiment has changed upon this subject? The solution of this question is not difficult. The whole secret of the matter is, that the sole method of meeting the question here, and in the North and South, has been by violence, and an utter disregard of constitutional and legal obligations. Resistance has been put, not upon reason, but upon force. Indeed, by logical sequence, this is the only mode in which the argument could be met. Slavery stands wholly upon the law of violence and superior force. It finds no support in equity, in justice, in right, in Christianity. It begins by inciting to cruel war by the basest means; proceeds, through bloodshed and rapine, to the sale of captives to brutal traders and pirates; through the horrors of the slave ship and the middle passage, to sales to Christian masters. Every step is marked with ferocity and blood. Slavery is at war with every sentiment of justice and humanity, and with every principle of that higher law "whose seat is the bosom of God, and whose voice is the harmony of the world."

I speak deliberately, Mr. Chairman, when I say, for myself, that no forms of constitution or law, however solemnly agreed upon, or whatever high claims they may have to authority, intended to recognise, or authorize, or guarantee, any such system of outrage and violence upon human rights, has any the least efficacy to bind the conscience or control the action of any citizen of any Government under heaven. It is clear usurpation and tyranny, and not law. It stands, I say, wholly upon the law of force. Its most eloquent and able advocate upon this floor admitted in debate, the other day, that there was not even the form of law in any of the slave States upon which it could

repose. It is wholly without support, except upon the tyrannous doctrine of superior force. By and by, some Annus or Spartacus will rise up in their midst, and contest with the masters this question of superior force.

Now, sir, this controversy arose between the colonizationists and the emancipationists. So long as emancipation was sought by colonization, discussion was lawful and proper—the church doors flew open, and the public peace was not endangered; but when it was sought to be proved that colonization meant further guaranties for eternal bondage, and was the deadliest foe to emancipation—the end pretended to be sought—and that immediate freedom was the right of the slave, discussion became all at once criminal; the church stood aghast, and feared it as the devil does holy water. Commerce, sir, was shocked, and went down upon its knees to this throned monarch, cotton. The attempt everywhere, North and South, was to suppress the discussion of the question by violence and unlawful measures. In the North, freedom of speech and of the press was put down by mobs. Garrison was assailed, and dragged about the streets of Boston with a halter about his neck. In Utica, New York, a convention was driven out of the city by a mob, headed by judges, and lawyers, and merchants, and the first citizens. In Alton, Lovejoy's press was destroyed, and he was cruelly murdered. Violent denunciatory meetings were held in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and in all of our commercial cities. The Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Everett, recommended proceedings by indictment against Abolitionists at common law, as disturbers of the public peace. Governor Marcy, of my own State, recommended a special statute to meet the case. William Sullivan, a noted lawyer of Boston, published a tract in Massachusetts, recommending the same enactment there. Dr. Beecher—a name which may have been heard by my friends upon the other side—and his associates, in Lane Seminary, Ohio, peremptorily forbade discussion there, and eighty young men were driven from that institution, to spread free sentiments in the North.

In the South, the same violence was exhibited. The Georgia Legislature offered a reward of \$5,000 for the arrest and delivery of Garrison for trial in that State. In New Orleans, \$20,000 was offered for Tappan. Birney was expelled by violence from Kentucky, and his presses were destroyed in Cincinnati. The mails were violated by the seizure and destruction of incendiary documents. We have seen recently the extraordinary spectacle of a Postmaster General officially advising his deputies in reference to the construction of a *State law for robbing the mails*—that they should not do it by wholesale, but they should call a jury of the neighbors, if they could read, and try, or rather should themselves pass upon, each individual paper by itself. In a word,

the same system of violence and terror was then established, North and South, which is now attempted to be revived at the South. It will have the same effect upon the North, which they mean to terrify by threats, and upon the non-slaveholding whites of the South, whom they mean to keep down by ignorance. Southern presses and statesmen talk of non-intercourse and Southern direct trade. They forget that several elements are necessary for prosperous commercial cities: among which are, healthy locations, established courses of trade, following which are accumulations of capital with banks and insurance offices, and expensive structures in docks and warehouses; that safety is indispensable, of life, liberty, and property, and freedom of opinion; and that merchants are not apt to congregate where without trial an irresponsible mob may confiscate their property, drive them without notice from their homes and business, and even take their lives for non-conformity to the established faith on the subject of slavery. They forget that trade cannot prosper where the mercantile traveller cannot exhibit his samples unless he goes under a passport, and his soundness in the faith is endorsed by members of Congress.

The despotism which utterly excludes any freedom of opinion or speech; the dishonesty which violates, without compunction, contracts with teachers in schools, with public lecturers, because of their birthplace, or a chance literary connection with a proscribed newspaper, is not friendly to commercial prosperity and independence.

As this controversy progressed, the Anti-Slavery party in the North began to petition Congress to abolish slavery in this District, to put an end to the inter-State slave trade, and to abolish it in all the Government arsenals, dock-yards, and other places under the Federal jurisdiction. The Abolitionists at this time were few in numbers, without political influence, being in the main non-resistants, and opposed to voting. They were only strong in their earnestness and in the justice of their cause.

Very few men, in Congress or out of it, were prepared to accede to their demands; and the fatal weakness of slavery was again shown by violent denunciations of the petitioners, and of those who dared to present their petitions. The obstinacy, folly, and arrogance, of the slave propagandists, led them to deny the right of petition itself; and they enlisted against them, in that contest for the suppression and denial of a clear constitutional right, the wisest, the ablest, the most indefatigable, the most learned legislator of the Republic—a noble man,

“With iron nerve, to true occasion true.”

It was not only a contest for clear and undeniable constitutional rights, but one essential to the existence of freedom, the right to exercise which is not denied to the meanest subject

by the cruellest despotism on earth. But the South planted themselves upon an untenable and despotic ground, but one clearly in accordance with the whole spirit of their institutions.

Next arose the controversy upon the acquisition of Texas; but I will pass by the history of that matter, with the single observation that the whole scheme of annexation was considered by the North as an attempt, by dishonorable means, and by taking an undue advantage of the weakness of a neighboring State, to wrest from her a territory to which we had no just claim, for the sole purpose of extending and strengthening the institution of slavery; and that it was an unconstitutional aggression upon the North. Then, and in consequence of this seizure of her territory, came the Mexican war; the acquisition of a vast territory thereby; the discovery of gold in California; the consequent rapid settlement of that territory; and then, the renewal of the controversy in relation to the territorial policy of the Government. There had been a general acquiescence in the policy established by the enactment of the Missouri compromise, in pursuance of which States had been admitted south of 36° 30' with slavery, while north of that line slavery had been excluded. The power of Congress to fix the *status* of a Territory in respect to the exclusion of slavery had hardly been controverted up to this time. Now, all parties were in a state of confusion. The controversy resulted in the compromise measures of 1850.

What was the character of those measures of legislation? California stood, upon right and principle, fairly entitled to admission, and should have been admitted unconditionally, as a free State, upon every principle for which Northern and Southern men contended; but its admission was coupled, among other things, with the fugitive slave law—a measure of little consequence as a practical measure, as all such laws always have been, and always will be. But it was brought forward as a test of soundness of opinion, a test of conservatism and nationality. Very few fugitives ever were returned under it, or any law, in proportion to the number escaping. Great ingenuity was exerted to make the fugitive slave bill as bad and as villainous as possible. Men who would cheerfully acquiesce in it might be relied upon to buy and sell—nay, they would sell the issue of their own loins, or send their mothers into the cotton fields, for gold.

Very few disputed the right of reclaiming slaves under the Constitution, or would have resisted any decently humane law for their rendition, although no law could ever be of any practical value. But no law can be found upon the statute books of any civilized nation, having so many cruel and disgraceful features as this. In its general tone and spirit, it makes charity a crime, and puts out the fires upon the hearth of hospitality. It strikes down every safeguard of the liberty of the citizen which

has been extorted from tyranny through centuries of blood, from the time the victorious barons at Runnymede extorted Magna Charta from King John to the present. It denies the right of trial by jury where more than life and property is concerned. It prohibits the *habeas corpus*—the writ of liberty. It prevents the confronting of the witnesses with the accused, and deprives him of the right of an open and fair cross-examination. It offers a direct and open bribe to the judge to decide in favor of the rich, against the poor and friendless—small, indeed, but sufficient, for no one will hold an office where he may be an executioner of this infamous law, whose integrity would be proof against a bribe of five dollars. Treating persons as property, and the claimants of this species of property as privileged above others, it provides for the return of it, upon the mere suggestion of apprehended danger, at the expense of the public Treasury.

In my judgment, it is unconstitutional in this: first, that it is not within the power of legislation granted to Congress; second, it creates judicial officers, courts, not in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution. I know it is contended that the commissioners referred to in this act have no right to *try*, do not act as *judges*; but that they are only ministerial officers, and their only office is to return persons to the place from which they fled, for *trial* there; and we are gravely assured that justice always prevails in Southern tribunals. The proceedings under this act are likened to those for the return of persons accused of crime. But the manifest distinction between them is overlooked—that the alleged criminal is formally demanded by the Executive of one State from the Executive of another; that he will neither be demanded nor surrendered by such magistrates, unless responsibly charged, by indictment found, or on a case otherwise satisfactorily established, with a crime generally acknowledged as a felony; and when surrendered, he is put into the charge and keeping of the law and its officers for *trial* only, and is to be taken to the particular State and county where charged with crime, to be tried by jury, and in an open, fair, and legal mode, before punishment can be inflicted; while, in the other case, a citizen may be claimed by some base speculator, who has bought a negro running, and may prove a general description by deposition of straw-heeled witnesses whom nobody has ever seen, before some obscure judge whom nobody has ever heard of, and make an unimpeachable record under this law, which would not be a respectable record for a justice's court; and the man seized under such proceedings is beyond the relief of *habeas corpus*, and is given up—not, as in the other case, to the officers, and put under the protection of the law as an accused citizen, with an acknowledged right to a public trial, but surrendered as *property* to a master, who, instead

of returning where either are known, may sell him to hopeless bondage in the nearest slave mart. The trial, or mockery of trial, before the commissioner, is therefore *final*, and his judgment conclusive, and subject to no appeal or review. Is he not, then, to all intents a judge, exercising most important judicial functions?

We do not propose the repeal of this law; let it stand, a fit monument to the folly and madness of the times; but is it not enough to try the *temper* as well as the faith of the believer in human progress, that such a law could be passed by an enlightened Republic, in the nineteenth century, and that it is made not only the test of the citizen's loyalty to his country, but of the Christian's to his God? It must have been expected—I believe it was intended that such a law should produce counter legislation in the free States—that personal liberty bills would be passed, as they have been—though not half as stringent as they ought to be—to discharge the duty which every independent State owes to each of its citizens, however humble—I mean protection to their personal liberty.

It must have been expected that so infamous a law would have been evaded by underground railroads, and by all other honorable methods. And let me assure gentlemen that they deceive themselves if they suppose that there is any real difference in sentiment among Northern people in relation to this law. All parties wink at its evasion, and all sympathy is with the fugitive who proves, by a successful flight, that there is enough man in him to make an earnest effort for freedom. He who can suppress such sympathy, and on the requisition of the marshal, under the fifth section, attempts to show that he is a good citizen by "aiding and assisting in the prompt and efficient execution of this law whenever his services are required," ought himself to be a slave.

The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. GARNETT] tried to frighten Republicans from voting for Governor PENNINGTON for Speaker, by saying he was in favor of the law—I presume he is, *theoretically*—that he is a law and order man, and has a general notion that *laws* should be obeyed. It would have staggered me if I had fully believed the charge; for I hold that any man who really approves the law of 1850, and believes in it, is only fit to hold some very mean position in the gift of a certain gentleman in sables, whose name should not be mentioned to ears polite. But I remembered a conversation one morning, in which he had told me of a chained cofle of twenty-five human beings, who, driven by armed and brutal drivers, had passed within sight and hearing of this Hall that morning for a Southern market. There was but little said between us—language can do no justice to such a subject—but I looked into his eye, and I marked the compressed lip and heaving chest, which gave evidence to me

of a human heart within ; and I thought, as I gave him my vote, that if one of those purchased slaves should escape the chain and the rifle and the bloodhounds and the hunters and the marshals and commissioners, and, guided by the light which yet emanates from the battle-fields of the Revolution, cross the brave little State of New Jersey, and should make his way to that stately and hospitable mansion upon the heights of Newark, and should ask for food and shelter, and recite the story of his wrongs, I did think and believe, and I do still think and believe, that he would interpose the "broad seal" of his humanity between him and the fugitive slave bill. I think I can hear him repeat, as he blesses the stranger at parting, warmed and fed and clothed, and having scrip for his journey, the hospitable lines of the poet :

"And *Stranger* is a holy name ;
Guidance and rest and food and fire,
In vain, he never must require."

I am not, sir, a believer in the doctrine that a bad, infamous, and unconstitutional enactment—I cannot call it *law*—should be obeyed until it is repealed. I have not so learned the true spirit and theory of free and democratic government. No citizen would ever be sustained in any factious resistance to just and equal laws, upon any light and trivial ground of inconvenience, or even unavoidable and unintentional hardship ; but where a real question of personal and civil right and liberty is involved, or the rights of conscience are invaded, it is the duty of the citizen to resist. In a question of right and conscience, the individual citizen is the final judge, and not the Government, or any branch thereof, Executive, Judicial, or Legislative. If the encroachments of the Government are generally tyrannous and oppressive, so that they become intolerable, there is the well-established remedy in the people—the right of revolution. If the tyranny does not reach the whole State, nor call for that last resort of an oppressed people, but only is directed at a sect, a class, or even an individual, there is the equally clear and indisputable right of peaceful resistance short of revolution. So the Friend resists the law compelling him to bear arms, and the Catholic the test oaths. By suffering the penalties of an unjust and wicked law, public attention is called to its injustice, and the wholesome lesson is taught, that

"Firm endurance wins at last
More than the sword."

And so I contend that no citizen in a Republic discharges his duty who fails to bring an infamous law into public odium and disgrace, and steadfastly to resist its encroachments. So old Eleazer taught, when he refused to eat the flesh abhorred by his conscience and his religion, or even to seem to eat it ; and rather than submit to the law which demanded it, went manfully to the torment, lest he should bring reproach upon his gray hairs and the excellency of his ancient and honorable years ;

and so he died, leaving a notable example of courage, not to young men only, but to all generations. This was the teaching of Milton, and Hampden, and Sidney ; and in our own age and land, of Otis, and Adams, and the patriots and martyrs of the Revolution. And I regard it as a sign of the degeneracy of the times, that the test of good citizenship in a free Government has come to be blind and unresisting submission to judicial or legislative, any more than to executive tyranny ; and "if this be treason, make the most of it."

In 1854, the act familiarly called the Kansas-Nebraska act was passed. In it, under a flimsy and dishonest pretence, the Missouri compromise was repealed. This act shocked the public sense of justice and fair dealing. It was believed, and is true, that the South had received all the benefits which they had ever justly expected under that compact, and repealed it as soon as they found it in the way of their changed territorial policy. For myself, I have never regretted its repeal, and never would consent to its restoration. It has removed all trammels and all feelings of delicacy in Northern minds, and has left them free to judge, upon the merits, whether slavery is a good, safe, and desirable institution for an infant State. And it settles the question of more slave States ; for if slavery is prevented in the Territories, it is practically excluded from the States. It is already demonstrated that in settling Territories the slave States stand no chance with the free. Whether slavery is prohibited in the old and honest way, by Congressional legislation, or whether the question is settled by the inevitable force and fraud and bloodshed of squatter sovereignty, does not appear essentially to vary the result. As slave property is timid, and cannot place implicit confidence in the *obiter dicta* of political partisans in judicial robes, knowing that even the settled and honest convictions and opinions of courts are liable to revision and reversal ; as the young men reared in the luxury and unthrift of the plantation are not fitted for the hardships of border life ; as the non-slaveholding, nominal freemen of slave communities are ignorant and unenterprising, it does so happen that, with all favoring circumstances—a corrupt Federal Executive, ready to encourage any scheme of fraud and violence ; an intervening and hostile slave State to close and guard all the accustomed routes of travel, and to invade and destroy their settlements—free-State emigration has triumphed, and under all these discouragements and disadvantages has shaped the policy and fixed the institutions of these Territories. And as bloody instructions are apt to return to plague the inventors, so recent and well-remembered events have proved the impolicy and danger of giving free-State men the sort of training which they acquired in Kansas.

There are, sir, weighty reasons for not permitting slavery in the Territories. The argument, though subtle and fair-seeming, that the

people of the slave States, having an equal right in the Territories, have also a right to take their *property* with them, and that to deny them the right is unjust and unequal, is entirely fallacious. The able and ingenious Senator from Mississippi, [Mr. DAVIS,] in his reply to the suggestions of the Senator from New York, [Mr. SEWARD,] about capital States, spoke of slavery as "a form of civil government." In truth, setting aside all moral reasons for the denial, slaves never have been, and never in the nature of the case can be, treated merely as property; they are men, answerable as such for crimes, capable always of freedom by manumission, and though they cannot, if the Supreme Court is right, be recognised as citizens having rights themselves, they are regarded as persons giving important political rights to others. We therefore deny the right or justice of taking slavery into the Territories under the pretence that they are taken there as property. We deny it on political considerations. If, as the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. LAMAR] said, with great spirit, we have, by our consent in the old States, got the "negro in the Constitution," and he is represented by twenty members on the floor of this House, we will not consent that the inequality shall go further. We will take care to exclude this "political relation" from the Territories, and that it does not steal in, in the mild disguise of "property"—a wolf clothed in wool.

We refuse slavery a footing in the Territories for economical reasons—it impoverishes a State; for moral reasons—it begets ignorance. A system of common public education is physically impossible in a plantation State. It destroys the marriage relations, makes cruel tyrants of the masters, and brutes of the slaves. For reasons of safety; for every community in which the relation exists is constantly liable to bloody and fearful domestic insurrections, and weak and defenceless against invasion.

I have pursued this subject with a view to the inquiry, what is the North to do? And what has she done in the past, which she could have omitted and remained faithful and true to her own history and principles? We would most gladly have been relieved from all action upon, and all responsibility for, slavery. We had our own interests to protect and advance. We had discharged our duty on the subject of slavery in good faith and sincerity, according to the original sentiment of the people and policy of the Government. We had abolished slavery, and were busy with our schools, our factories, our farms, our commerce, and our prosperous affairs. We were not disposed to interfere, although you saw fit to change your sentiments, and to abandon that old and safe policy which looked to free institutions and the abandonment of slavery. Your aggressions forced the North into this contest—to defend the liberty of speech and of the press; to maintain the right of peti-

tion; to secure their citizens rights, plainly and in terms guarantied by the Constitution, and assailed by your unjust and unconstitutional laws; to prevent the acquisition of territory by unconstitutional measures, and required for no purpose other than that of extending and perpetuating slavery, and increasing its power and influence in the Government; to defend the Territories from the curse of slavery, and maintain the old and well-settled policy of the country in regard to them. And you are now driving them to a more determined resistance to the reopening of the accursed traffic which has reddened old ocean with its cruelty, and freighted all the winds of heaven with its groans.

The natural, inevitable, and logical result, has been the organization of the Republican party, now the controlling and dominant party in nearly all the free States.

It rests upon the sentiment and conviction that all men are entitled to equal civil rights; that freedom and its institutions are better foundations for a new State than slavery and its attendants; and the determination to establish no government except in accordance with such principles.

They claim no power to change or alter the laws and institutions of existing States; nor to interfere therewith, except so far as the example of their safety, strength, and prosperity, and the proper discussion and defence of their principles and institutions, may exercise a moral influence upon their policy.

While they disclaim all interference with State laws, policy, and institutions, they do claim the power, and will exercise it whenever, in their judgment, it is just and prudent, to free the General Government from all responsibility for the existence and continuance of slavery wherever they have exclusive jurisdiction over it.

As their resistance to the extension of slavery is founded upon the conviction of its injustice and its unfitness, so they will be led to oppose any new demands which it may make, and any and all measures for its increase by the revival of the foreign trade or otherwise. And while we are determined to adhere inflexibly to this policy, we have no unkindness for slaveholders. They have a great problem to solve, and should have sympathy and succor. The whole power and revenue of the Government should, with my consent, be freely exerted and expended in their aid. The destinies of this Republic hang upon the issue of this contest; and while I look on with fear and trembling, I still look forward with hope to the time when we may exclaim to the oppressed of every clime and language, and birthplace and complexion, as they first plant their footsteps upon our shores, "bow down and worship, for the soil on which you stand is *sacred*, and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation."

